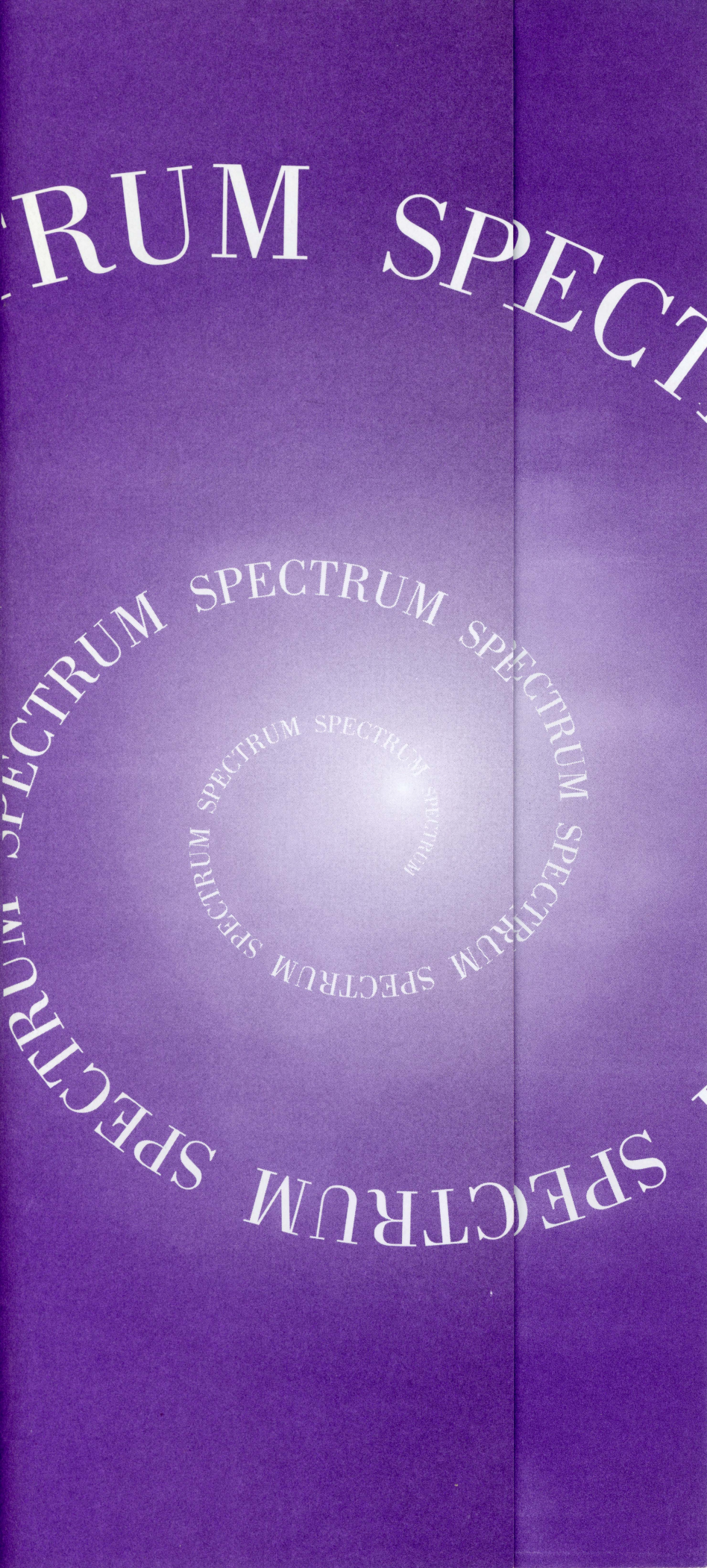
RUM SPECT
SPECTRUM SPECTRUM SPECTRUM SPECTRUM
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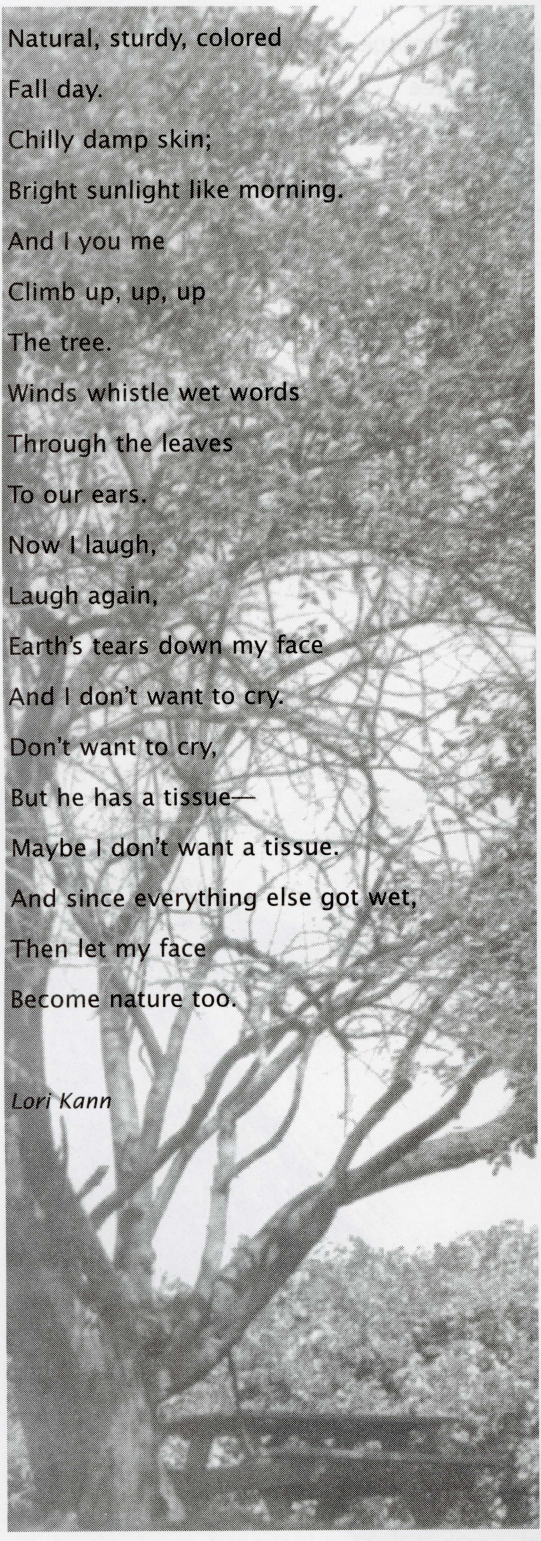
Monkey Boy

Beside the orange moon
Up in the tree
Puffing away on Marlboro Lights
Looking for the monkey boy
With the white face
Glowing from the red lighter
We will take him home
And potty-train him
We were monkeys once
Remember?

Marie Schwartz

Artwork by: Jaimie Cheng

People, Trees, and Dr. Seuss



Natural, sturdy, colored
Fall day.
Chilly damp skin;
Bright sunlight like morning.
And I you me
Climb up, up, up
The tree.
Winds whistle wet words
Through the leaves
To our ears.
Now I laugh,
Laugh again,
Earth's tears down my face
And I don't want to cry.
Don't want to cry,
But he has a tissue—
Maybe I don't want a tissue.
And since everything else got wet,
Then let my face
Become nature too.

Lori Kann

Photo by: Shannon Wynne

Nervous Breakdown-3

Relaxed breakthrough, I lift
And disconnect. I never
Wish to come here again.
Send me home. Nervous
Breakdown. Lying on all
These broken train tracks
In beauteous scenery.
I hear the blare of the
Car. Clickety-clack of its
Movement, but the power of
Words remains me
Motionless, a nickel from
My pocket and a paper of
Goodbye, soaked in oil. Clickety-
Clack, in the power of words
I lie at the end of one-way.
Nervous Breakdown.

Ann Sosnowski

Untitled

Lurking jerking weeping child
trembles on his words a while
smiling kindly gentle friend
offers him an ice cream then
took a while to say "Hello"
harder now "Thank You" to know
weeping sobbing hand at brow
'least he has an ice cream now.

Joel Griffith

Photo by: Sigrid Perez

Bar Massacre

Chambers of dusk
Lit by the dull yellow
Of flickering bulbs
Outline bruised thin silhouettes.

Thin frames
Hung with meager flesh
Stir in a disturbed sleep
Forgotten pictures of the past,

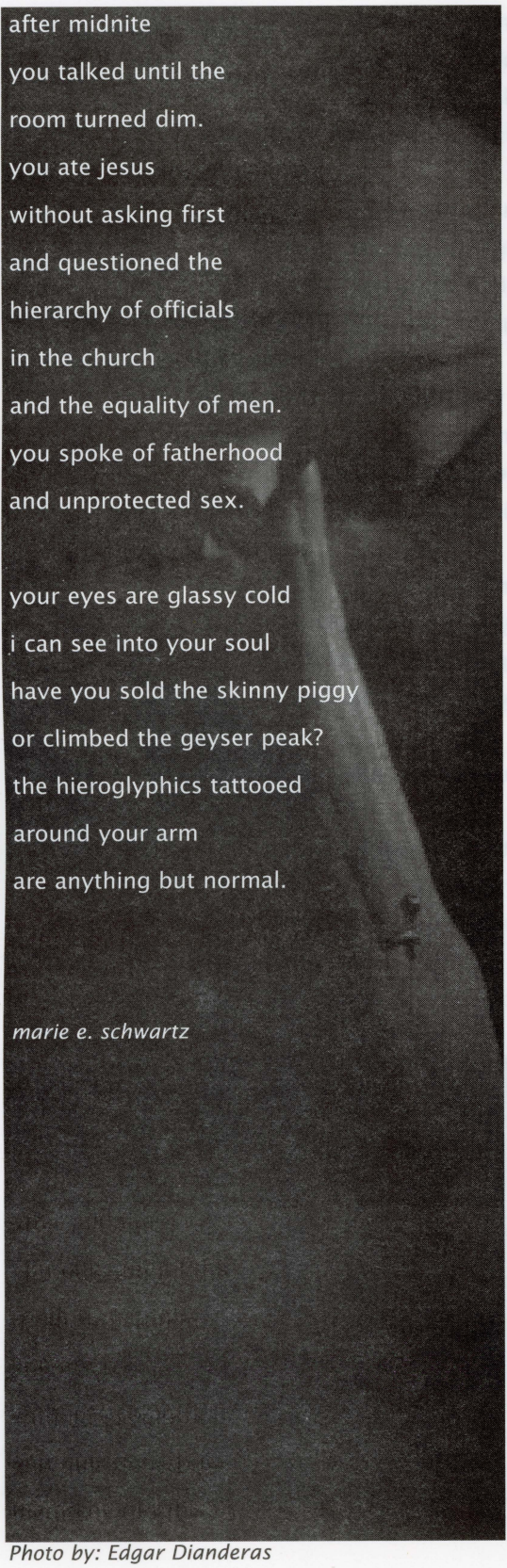
Not forgotten within their souls.
Six million soldiers of a new army
Added to the war
Against *difference.*

Sprinted back,
They may have spoiled the Nazi machine
As gaunt soldiers of death
Bringing illimitable fury.

Let us not just add that to the list
of Earthly tragedies.
Try to comprehend six million.
The brain cannot
Remember it as the greatest misdeed.

Rudolph Matthews

Photo by: Nikki Rascilla



after midnite
you talked until the
room turned dim.
you ate jesus
without asking first
and questioned the
hierarchy of officials
in the church
and the equality of men.
you spoke of fatherhood
and unprotected sex.

your eyes are glassy cold
i can see into your soul
have you sold the skinny piggy
or climbed the geyser peak?
the hieroglyphics tattooed
around your arm
are anything but normal.

marie e. schwartz

Photo by: Edgar Dianderas

Trifle Not

Clouds and winds
I trifle not
In swallows

Rudolph Matthews

FRAH

Solids are themselves concrete
but concrete is made of sand
of grains where no two are the same.
Humanity's a thing discrete
and each a child of man with faces
and a brain
Where no two are the same.

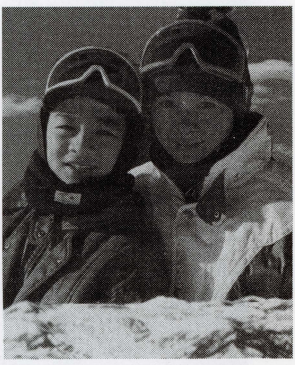
Joel Griffith

Love at First Doubt

What is love
But an excuse for loneliness?
What is life
But a solo journey?

Why do we need . . . ?
Water still flows
Time remains abstract
Why do I need . . . ?

Are Your lips soft?
How do I know?
Why are You alone?
Karma?



Artwork by: Vinnie Lee

Passion runs smoother than blood
Emotion runs higher than magma
Preliminaries prove despondent
Why try?

My words utter or stutter
All lucidity leaves me
At Your presence
Confusion . . .

If water finds
A way through
Why can't
Sand?

Explain Your fancy
Don't lead me
Rivers run through Your soul
Will they contribute to mine

If I wait
Leaves turn brown
In summer
Nay?

Caress me
Make me Yours
I'll make You mine
Or life will be a solo journey . . .

Rudolph Matthews

Images of Time

I can see the world
Through her eyes, like glass
As they watch passing cars
On Saturday morning when I finally wake.
She talks of the lights
—Bright fast city men, glamour—
She drinks, and she dances,
Spins, and shimmers.
Her long blonde hair
And her long slender legs
Define every essence
Of what it means to be she.
To be young, fierce, and free.
Radiant.
Phone rings. Phone rings.
And an older woman
Forces her body to rise
From the chair where she sat
And walks to the kitchen
To answer the call.
Her blue eyes, through her glasses,
Glance on her daughter
And wish her well
As she closes the door
And escapes like dreams do
Between consciousness and sleep.

Lori Kann

Photo by: Edgar Dianderas

WONDERS WONDERS

Wonders wonders never knows
never every answer shows
Secrets yonder lurk in groves
mellow pastures green meadows
Pounding queries 'scapes my mind
Hounding answers time to time
All these myst'ries always rose
As a mind knows change it grows.

No one ever truly knows
every answer 'less he knows
how the answers fair may change
evading capture out of range
to any who beseech or
think of life as strange
forever seeking solids
when the absolute is change.

Joel Griffith

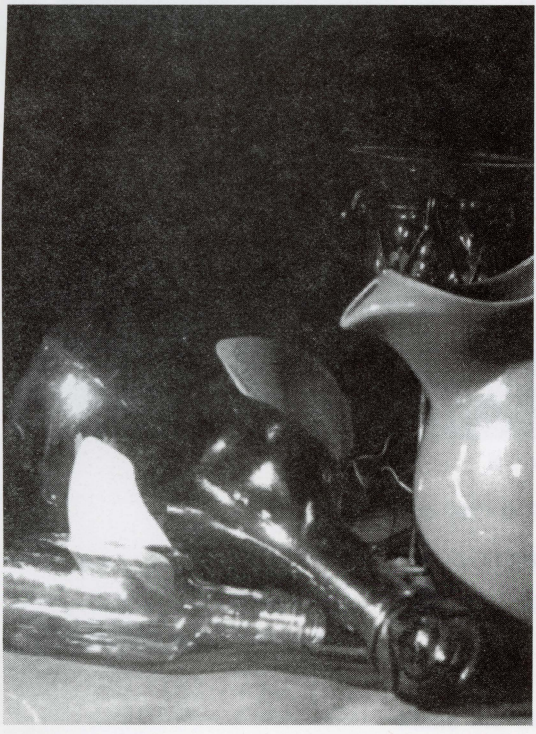


Photo by: Jim Roeder

The Stranger

You sit there taunting me,
your hair taking pleasure in the
dancing of the wind.
I see you over there,
on the park bench
shaped like the pillars of Greek architecture.
You stroke the blinding white paper
with that microscopic pen,
your words becoming larger than my world.
I wish I could read them,
taste their beauty with my eyes.
But these sidewalks and these fields
become the Great Wall between us.
It's curiosity that breaks my steady hand,
my fingers pulsating,
trying to find the words to describe
the beauty of a figure
sitting alone.
Go ahead,
write it down,
what I'm thinking,
because I know you can see my eyes.
They scream hunger,
and I scream inside,
dying to know who you are.

Jaime Long

Round Ground

Elvis has a friend named Bill
Midnight sax heard on Capitol Hill
I got to thinking about the states

Beltway hounds were running round
I asked myself to make a sound
I got to thinking about the race

I am rock and we are tree
Maya Angelou said to me
I got to thinking about the fates

What I am is what I eat
I chew that egg and gulp that beet
I got to thinking about my plate

Round and round spirograph
I push that cry and shake that laugh
I got to thinking about gyrate

Sun's the hub and Earth's on a spoke
Swing the moon like a soap on a rope
I got to thinking about the space

The ground is round
it goes round and round
round and round and round

Last I saw the brother lie
Shades were pulled upon his eyes
I got to thinking about his face

Me and she make it we

I bounce the cat upon my knee

I got to thinking about palpate

The tree outside called my name

Sang my song and played my game

I got to thinking about the place

The ground is round

it goes round and round

round and round and round

The ground is round

it goes round and round

round ground going round

Tom Hopkins

An Early Day

I ate a bagel that morning
Covered in salt and poppy seeds
And I smelled the warm coffee and newspapers
While 'toons covered the television.
He got his rice-based creamer
And sat next to me at the table.
He looked at me, but only for a second,
And love, love I did not understand
But had known all my life,
Seeped into my eyes
And melted to my shoulders.
I had poppies in my teeth,
And I told him, "I have to leave for work."
He responded, "Well, have a nice day, honey."
He offered me an alternate route
To avoid traffic.
I half-smiled and walked out the door,
But I had to go back and get a coat because
It was cold and damp outside.

Lori Kann

you bit me this morning

you bit me this morning
tore fresh fragrant skin right
off my arm—that is to say you pinched me
this morning with your white like mother's milk
teeth & pricked my flesh

two small pinholes like a rattlesnake's bite
and yet, i wish i could let it go
& i wish i could hoot & fall back
on the cafe au lait carpet
& be loony just like you

but i know that i can not
my gut tells me no

so i chide you & it hurts you so

i tickle your chocolate milk tummy
& sniff your johnson's baby shampoo
hair & write it off like nothing happened

because you're two
and i want you to bite me
if it means you care

marie e. schwartz

Star Tart

There were stringy coincidences of mangos
Rolled from the table to the door,
That opened and spoke of tiramasu.
When garbled with hazelnuts,
They chop against corners of remembrance.

What should be forgotten and discarded,
Lies waiting among scars and silver statues,
Beads of sour starfruit that bite
Still in a mouth left hanging in wonder,
In poignant pleasure, plump reprobation.

However, a mouth swimming back into itself,
Now, hungry with shriveled intensity,
Slipped from empty, and pinched with
Bing Cherries and lessons in limes.
We are taught, twisted around to taste tart.

Amy May

Artwork by: Shannon Wynne

Letting Go

He walked away from me, and I slowly reached out for his hand. He turned to me and looked through wise eyes, and said, "It has to be this way—I have to go." I wanted to push him to the ground, make him feel the unbalancing act I was participating in. But I couldn't. He was so sincere, and I felt no emotion except for sorrow—that I would never be his Turtle Top again. He started to walk away, and out of habit, I said, "Psst." He turned back to me and saw my thumb, pointer, and pinkie fingers held up as a gesture of love. I gasped, and lost a few tears to the moment, realizing that I had to save this one for my memories. I watched him walk down the sidewalk, one hand holding his reclaimed possessions, the other against his forehead to hold up his head and hide his tears. As always, I watched him pass by all three kitchen windows, and through each one, I held up my hand displaying the familiar gesture to protest his good-bye. But this time, he did not turn to look. He just walked around the house, sobbing, almost unable to resist the temptation of looking back. We both knew that this was the last time to say, "Sleep tight, don't let the bedbugs bite (unless they're me)."

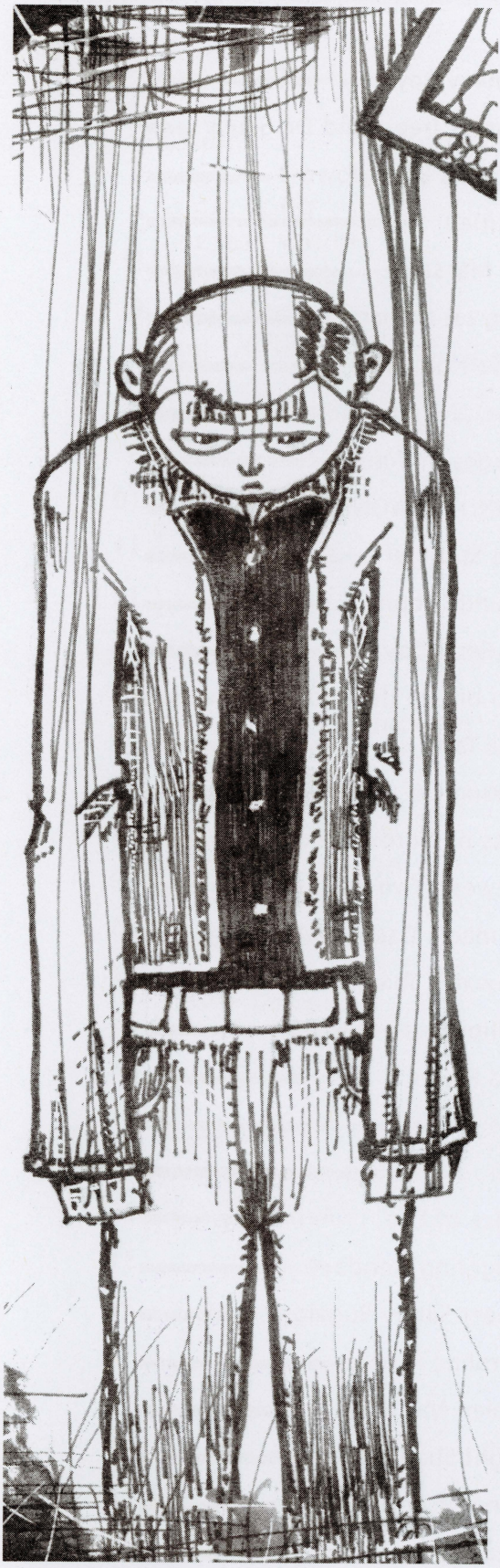
.Jaime Long

Artwork by: Laura Chatterton

Loss of Words

I could not breathe for a moment.
You took it upon yourself to indulge in my time.
I screamed and threw a newspaper at you.
You opened it up to the funny pages.
I laughed at your insecurity.
You did not want my lust after all.
You only wanted the satisfaction of knowing,
Knowing that you could have my body.
My heart stopped.
But only for a fraction of a second.
I would not die for you.
I turned my face away from your crinkled forehead.
You were enjoying this too much.
I grabbed by bag.
You took my hand and said, "Stay."
I told you to kiss off.
Don't you remember?
I smacked you in the face with my words and my bag.
You want me now.
Damned if you can have me.
I learned how to breathe again.

Jaime Long



Artwork by: Joel Griffith

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Between Two Weeds

I am sitting somewhere between the ledge and the window,
Watching you—the forever look on your face, somewhere
Between worry and wild—and an anger not quite black,
But, chrome puce, carnelian ink, raisin port and madder pink.
Petals mauve on my short eggshells and oyster white pretenses.
A sliver of fear, long since put away with bells of envy,
Stuffing of hate and dear dolls of spite rises into sable sulfur
Intrusions. Stems that drop petals to table: pink is bad, orange worse.
I strive against blue (that is forever lost). From this window to the
World, away from your face, float dandelions that I want to taste.

Amy May

Photo by: Joyce

Ishmael's Castle of Evolution

Trapped inside an evolutionary system
composed of opium and alcohol,
in a realm where the word *consistency*
has no meaning. Flash tints of a chaotic
universe, shallow and sweet. Floating
dreams and faded paintings breaking through
my window at night. Open minds
and willing hearts are drifting down that mystic river
into the sea of forgetfulness.

Digging and digging and digging, small
passages. Long, winding tunnels perhaps
going nowhere, but a chance you must take
if you are to carve yourself a new destiny.
How far do you want to go before you lose
your way home? There is no map to follow
and the edge of the world is closing in. And
there's something out there frightening us all.
Something about ourselves—our history, our destiny.
And we all know we're being brainwashed.

When the surreal becomes real and the truth is
impeached. When we no longer lead ourselves, but
obey everything we hear, when we are in danger and
it's too late to save ourselves, you long to hear something new.
You deserve to hear what we've all been missing, but you're
distracted by the constant hum in the background.
You reach the core, but quickly retreat to find the sun
burning in your eyes. And you're happy to go blind.

Kevin Wisniewski

Stewart's Toasted Cheese

The highlight of my week at Shrine of the Little Flower Catholic Elementary School was Stewart's toasted cheese, only offered on Fridays. I could order pizza or a hot dog every day, but I had to wait until Friday for toasted cheese. I think this was some sort of cruel punishment. Sister Francesca called my name and I walked up to receive my lunch. I felt as if I had just won an Oscar. I wanted to thank all the people who made this lunch possible. Sister handed me my toasted cheese and I instantly forgot about the brown bag agony I had endured over the past days.

I tried to savor the taste of my toasted cheese for as long as possible. I would tear off the plastic wrapper to unleash the wonderful smell of the melting cheese. The smell of chalk and overhead markers was instantly replaced by this wonderful aroma. The bread was supposed to be toasted, hence the name, but it was more like the color of melted butter. I ate the crust first because it was the only way to get to the soft, oozing, golden-yellow center. The sandwich was not big at all, but one was more than enough. After all, how much pleasure can you cram into a half-hour lunch in a Catholic school?

Maria Marsili

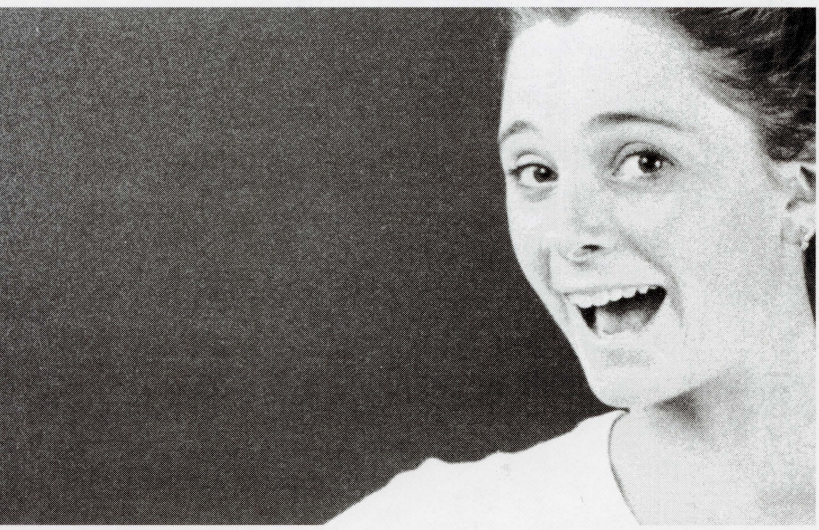


Photo by: Edgar Dianderas

By the way she held the lollipop in her mouth, he could tell she was not a virgin. Though she had been in the library every day since the semester began, he had not noticed her. It wasn't that she was ugly and he had been ignoring her, it's just that she was your average-looking college student-medium brown hair that hung to her shoulders, creating a veil when she leaned her head on her fist in concentration; brown eyes that never looked up from the page when someone walked past; and baggy sweaters and sweats that made no allusion to her gender—but with the lollipop in her mouth there was nothing asexual about her. At first she had just placed the candy in her mouth and let it sit there while her saliva washed over it, capturing the sweet taste of the sugar. After the mixture of sugar, and spit, and the cardboard stick had pooled in her mouth, she swallowed, letting the sugary syrup coat the back of her throat. While he watched, the spit of his own mouth gathered and he gulped it down, mimicking her actions, detecting the sour and the apple of her candy. Her lips wrapped tight around the stick as she sucked in and began the process again. Turning the stick from left—to right—making full circles—and then letting it rest in the crevice of the roof of her mouth.

He watched, mesmerized by the contradiction between the innocence of the actions and what they implied. The enchantress held her victim's gaze without even casting a spell.

Sara Harrah

Bad Places

"I've heard reasons like the smell, or the look of the place—an ugly fluorescent white—or even the sound, but the reason I hate this place is the reason you even come here."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, think about it. Why do you come here? For bad stuff. If something's wrong, then you come here. It's like a bad karma thing."

"But you don't get the 'bad stuff,' as you call it, here. You've already got it when you come."

"I know that, but that's my point. It's a place of death, blood—ew—and disease. All things you have no real . . . control over."

"The whole point of coming here is because there are people here who spend all their energy at least trying to control all those bad things."

"Listen, you said that you hated places like this and I said, me too, and then you asked, why, and I told you why. Now, you're jumping all over my case because of it."

"Sorry. It's my job to make you think."

"It does smell, though."

"Yeah, like sterilized ass."

"Ha!"

"Another reason to hate this place. . . one you didn't mention. . . "

"Yeah?

"You could come running through those doors that say 'Emergency,' squirting blood all over the place and you would still have to wait three hours for someone to call your name."

"Yup. . . I hate these places."

Dave Flanagan

The Janitor

Every night I see him as I leave the classroom, my mind swarming with a combination of fear, anger, and confusion about the ideas that have been presented to me on the philosophical and ethical issues of technology. It was the calmness of his demeanor that first attracted my attention, causing me to stop mid-step to watch as he moved his mop side-to-side, removing the hurried footsteps of the day. His shoulders are permanently hunched from years of stooping over the floors and trash cans of many classrooms, yet he is a proud man. I can tell by the way he meets my eyes as I stare at him.

"Hello," he says with warmth and ease as I stand there, jealous of the calmness he possesses. I echo his greeting, my eyes searching for the source of tranquility that surrounds him. He detects the trouble in my eyes and a smile spreads across his face. His eyes shine bright, like the section of tile he has just mopped. He moves to the right of the hallway to allow me to pass. "You be careful now," he warns as he motions for me to walk past.

"Actually I think I'll just sit here for a moment," I reply as I lay my backpack on the bench outside the classroom. My shoulders ache from the weight of the books and I wince as I catch a glance of his profile and the curve of his back.

"You seem to carry a heavy load," he says indicating my bag on the bench. I sigh in reply and then quickly offer an apologetic smile, wise enough to know that my burdens aren't even a fraction of what he has carried in his lifetime.

His wisdom supercedes mine, though, as he points the tip of the mop handle to his brow and smiles knowingly. "It's the weight of the thoughts that gets you down."

The rhythmic sway of the mop-strings glide across the floor, slowly washing away the black, scuff marks.

Sara Harrah

Ten

The ten of us slowly filed into the little room. We looked at each other, our eyes wide with emotion: fear, anxiety, excitement, nervousness, dread. The giant masks covered our faces snuggly and made breathing difficult. We lined up on the red circles painted on the gray concrete floor, two rows of five. Looking at each other in encouragement, we passed thumbs up signs down the lines—some bold, some hesitant.

Without warning, white smoke billowed out of a tin bucket sitting on the only piece of furniture in the room, a table. I watched the smoke curl and drift. Hey! The tops of my hands started to sting. I looked at my hands, but there wasn't anything on them. Owl! The back of my neck felt like it was burning. I resisted the urge to scratch my neck and hands as I looked around at the others. They were scratching their hands and slapping their necks. The guy next to me was jumping up and down, cursing. Then I began to notice an odd smell— like sulfur or burnt hair. Distressed, we glanced around, wondering what to do, when a large man entered the room. He, too, had a mask on.

"When I tell you to, you will lift your masks up, keep your eyes open, and remain that way until nine seconds have passed. I will count the nine seconds. If any of you pulls down your mask or closes your eyes, I will restart the count. Lift your masks, NOW!"

Frightened of the consequences, we obeyed him without hesitation. I took a deep breath before raising my mask. Immediately my eyes watered and my skin felt as if someone was taking a cheese grater to it. I struggled to keep my eyes open, concentrating only on holding my breath. As the man approached six seconds, I felt the overwhelming impulse to breathe in. Panicking, I began to jump up and down, attempting to distract myself from my need for air.

"Seven . . . eight . . . nine! Masks down! Clear and seal!"

I quickly pressed my hand to the rubber piece under my chin and vigorously blew out all the air remaining in my lungs into the mask. Then I pressed my other hand to the filter canister by my right cheek and sucked in, ensuring that my mask was sealed tight

to my face. Desperately, I drew in fresh filtered air, easing my aching lungs.

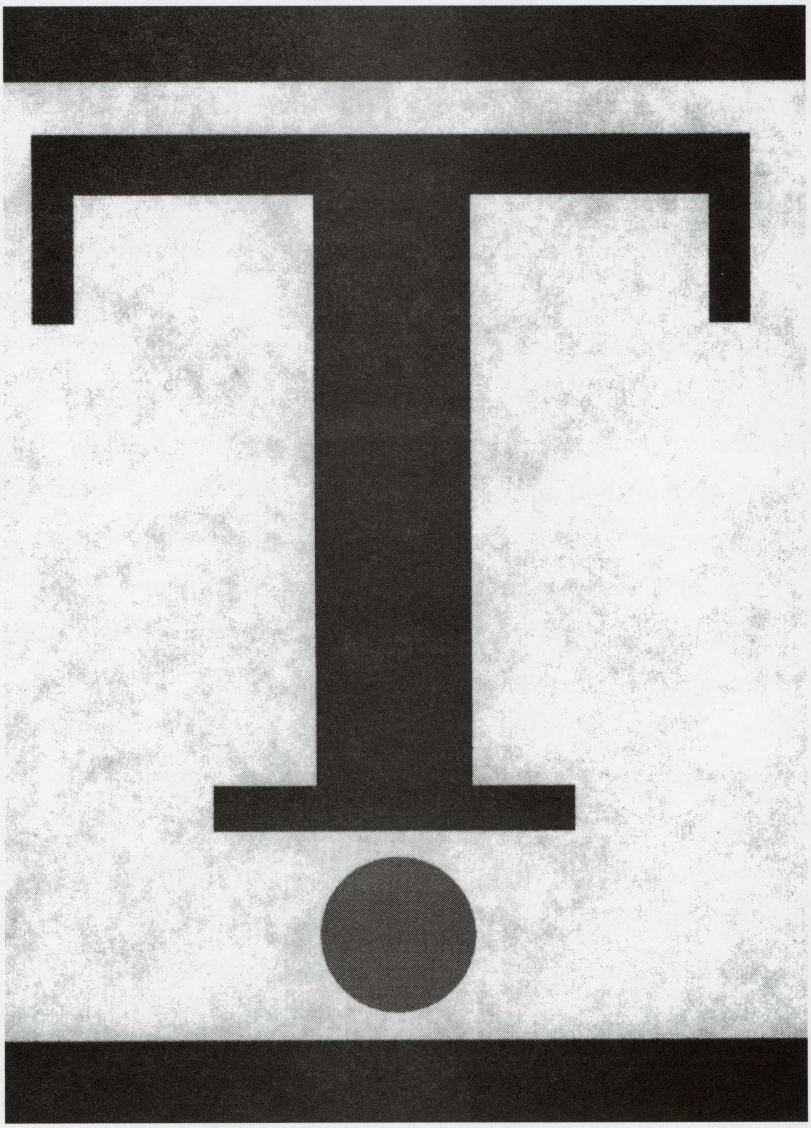
"Left face! Remove your masks! Now get out of my chamber!"

Without further encouragement, the ten of us quickly, filed out the back door.

"Woo, hoo! We did it! We survived the CS gas chamber!"

Ten US Army ROTC cadets cheered our accomplishment.

Diana Nalley



Artwork by: Tim Cole

Spice of Life

My father wore Old Spice all the time. It was his signature scent. Growing up, I would buy it for him on every occasion. On birthdays, and Father's Day, he would sit in his favorite spot on the sofa as we brought him presents. My siblings and I would stand in line like tin soldiers, waiting our turns. Before opening my gift, he would smile and say, "I wonder what this is?" Even as a child, I understood that he already knew. It made me feel good when he pretended to be surprised.

My dad worked night work, which meant I had to race home from school if I were to see him. Every afternoon I would cut through the neighbor's yard so I could make it home faster. If I came through the back door and my mom was cooking breakfast, I knew I wasn't too late. Dad was upstairs getting dressed. I followed the smell of Old Spice up the steps and down the hallway. There was my father putting on his favorite scent. He was stooped over the bathroom sink and staring in the mirror. A slap to each of his cheeks, and he was done. His hand in mine, we went down the stairs.

Breakfast time was 3:00 p.m. for my father. His favorite was two eggs and fried bologna. The word "cholesterol" was not in his vocabulary. I valued those afternoons spent together. While he ate, I would tell him about my day. There never was enough time before he had to leave for work. Normally, I would be asleep when he got home at night, but we had an interesting rule in our house. If one of us kids were sick, we were allowed to sleep on the sofa until our dad got home. I remember sitting together watching late night war movies with him. Parked in front of the TV, we would share a frozen dinner. I didn't even mind when the apple cobbler burned my tongue.

Twenty-five years have gone by, and those memories are still clear. They are locked in my mind, unaltered by time. Their familiarity gives me comfort. Old Spice hasn't changed either. One whiff and I'm eight years old again. Like childhood memories, some things don't need improving.

Russell Granruth

Lingering Goodbye

We held each other for what seemed like an eternity and then he pulled away. I could see the tears in his eyes, as I wiped my own away. I wanted to remain strong. I did not want him to see how much it hurt me to let him walk out of my life after three years. I stood on my front porch as he walked away that warm summer night. He turned when he reached his car and mouthed, "I will always love you." Every shred of me wanted to run and stop him, but deep down I knew it was for the best. Our lives had gone in separate directions and we could never go back to the way things were. With tears running down my cheeks, I watched him get in his car and back out of my driveway. I could hear a song, "our song," playing on his car radio as he drove down the street. How could he listen to that song now? My heart was breaking and the last thing I needed to hear was the song that reminded me of our three long years together. My knees felt weak and I sat on the cool concrete steps. Why didn't I stop him? Was I going to regret this moment the rest of my life? Was he the one for me? Did I just let my soulmate walk out of my life?

Kristen Merkel

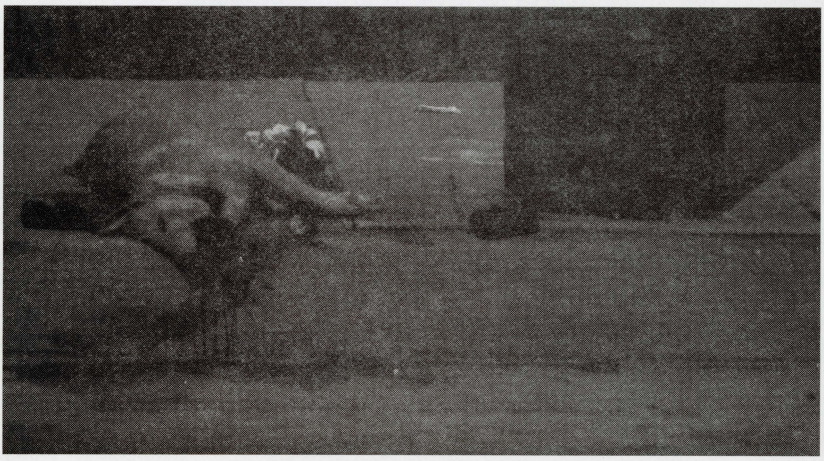


Photo by: Edgar Dianderas

Sweet Sandy Bungalow

Fingering through your hair,
wearing sunglasses that cover
most of your face,
watching the sun fall below the waves,
waiting for me once again.

You're all dressed up, but there's
nowhere to go and you don't
want to hear about it.

And once again you nag about something,
but I can't hear you. Yes, I said I can't hear you.
Having no relationship to language or simply
giving up on listening to what you want and
what I can't give.

Belly to the ground, I draw our home in the sand.
I dream it could be our little bungalow, our fortress
made of fool's gold. But you don't
want to hear about it.

I'm content to lie here and draw and play
and watch the reflected sky. I enjoy watching
children run around and saying hello to strangers walking by,
to those also enjoying themselves.

You're aggravated, pissed at something. You're
in one of those moods and it's probably best to
leave you alone.

You know, I'm still waiting for a conversation with
some meaning. But you never say what you feel.

I never used to, but I love the sand covering my body,
feeling it rub between my toes. You won't even take
off your shoes. And, oh yes, you're in love, but I'm burnt
and tired. So it's time to crawl out of my pit and climb into bed
with or without you. Maybe it's true what they say
and I'd be better off alone.
The self is clay and you have no memory.

Kevin Wisniewski

Artwork by: April Namsiriwan

Caroline

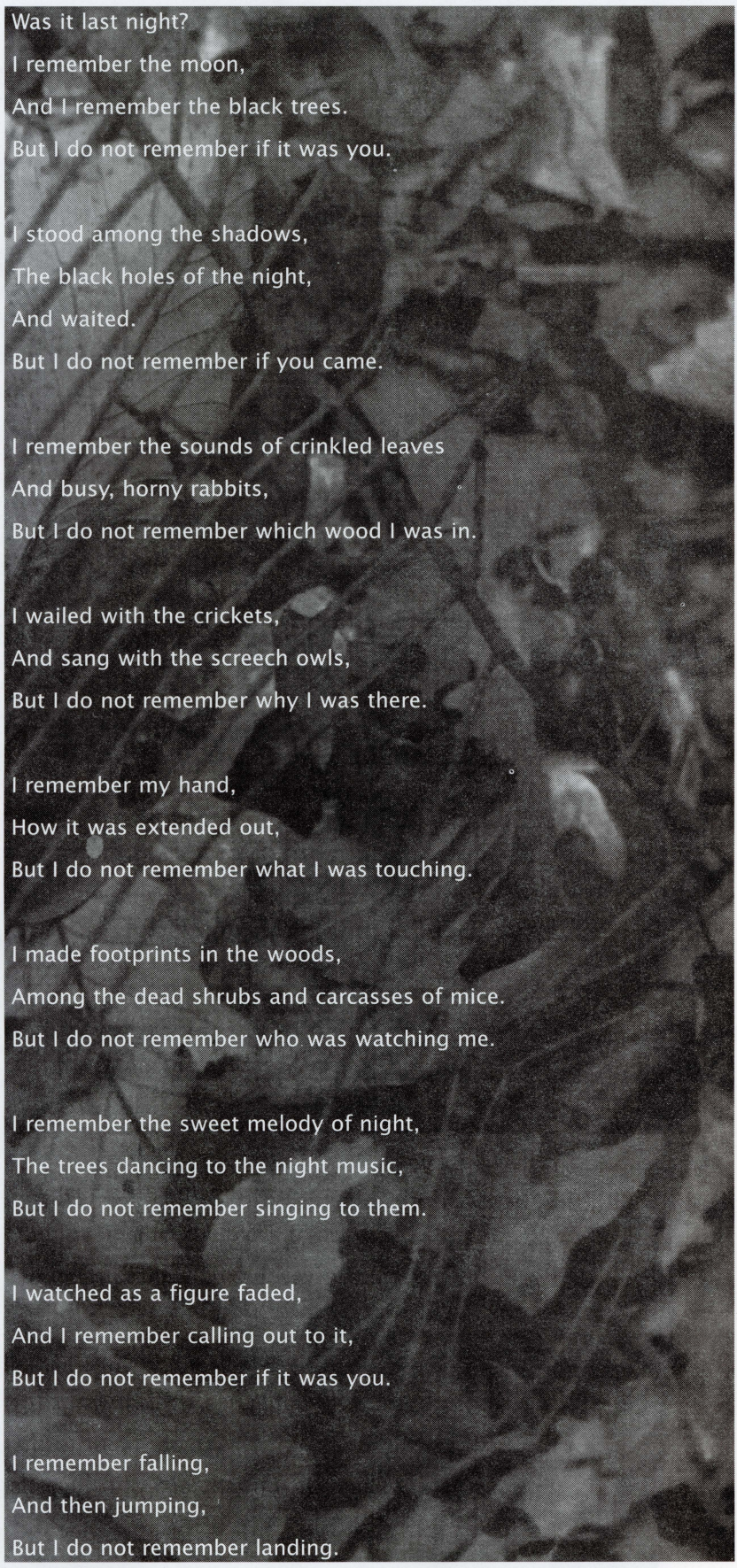
It was an unexpected drive-by shooting.
They usually are, but this was a shot that
Never made the six o'clock news. Yet she was
The perpetrator, gun still cocked and smoking
For five years forgotten at her side.
She had driven by this sign—Free Testing—perhaps forty
Times, and never thought, and could not remember then,
How at fifteen she was led up three flights that smelled
Of the underbellies of umbrellas, her mother at her side.
Trembling, small hands holding a butter tub half filled
With herself, holding the next seventy years of her life.
The fat volunteer with the hairy chin asking her questions
About her breasts—are they sore? are they bigger?
Bitch, she hardly knew she had breasts. The toys
By the plastic chairs seemed more familiar— Lincoln
Logs, tappy teddy bears with glass eyes hanging out,
Erector sets, and dime store dolls. Toys for children
Who were only thinking about existence.
The wait of an hour was a drawn-out farce.
She watched her dreams fade with the deepening frown
On mommy's face. The babies looked out to them from their posters,
Boasting three months of cells, making her cringe into
The teddy bears and think finally of the lithe boy with baby
Blond hair who put her in that room and filled her
Full of sand and salt. Left her feeling like she had been
Rolled for days in the waves—agonized hours on
Beaches and bathhouses and beds. Why? A passing fancy?
For nothing. She left with a childlike womb, still. An empty butter cup.
Time passed and soon she forgot. Forgot the state, the city, the
Very street of that room, heavily trafficked, three flights up.
And then she drives by five years later and truly sees
Like a shot, shock, forgotten cells still thinking.
Ready to come out of memory, ready to fly out of the blue.

Amy May

We couldn't set the house on fire.
There wasn't enough time.
We had a train to catch.
We left the couch smoldering.
I gave my father to another woman.
We had tried boats, but found
ghosts on the water, lapping
at the keel, begging
for something. Forgiveness
maybe. Company more likely.
I *cast my grandfather into the lake,*
Because drowning became a habit
in town. I soon forgot she was
not my sister or shadow.
and lost my mother to suicide.
I came from the only hotel in Montana
to try permanence, but continued
to sleep with my shoes on.
I surrendered my grandmother to old age
and my little sister to puberty.
She has learned well how to sleep
with her shoes cradling her skull
from concrete or wood.
I was left in this darkened house with her.
So after the boats we took
to trains. Carefully, across the bridge
we led the dogs
whose whining lost itself in the wind
over the water and iron.

Theresa White

Night Shadows



Was it last night?
I remember the moon,
And I remember the black trees.
But I do not remember if it was you.

I stood among the shadows,
The black holes of the night,
And waited.
But I do not remember if you came.

I remember the sounds of crinkled leaves
And busy, horny rabbits,
But I do not remember which wood I was in.

I wailed with the crickets,
And sang with the screech owls,
But I do not remember why I was there.

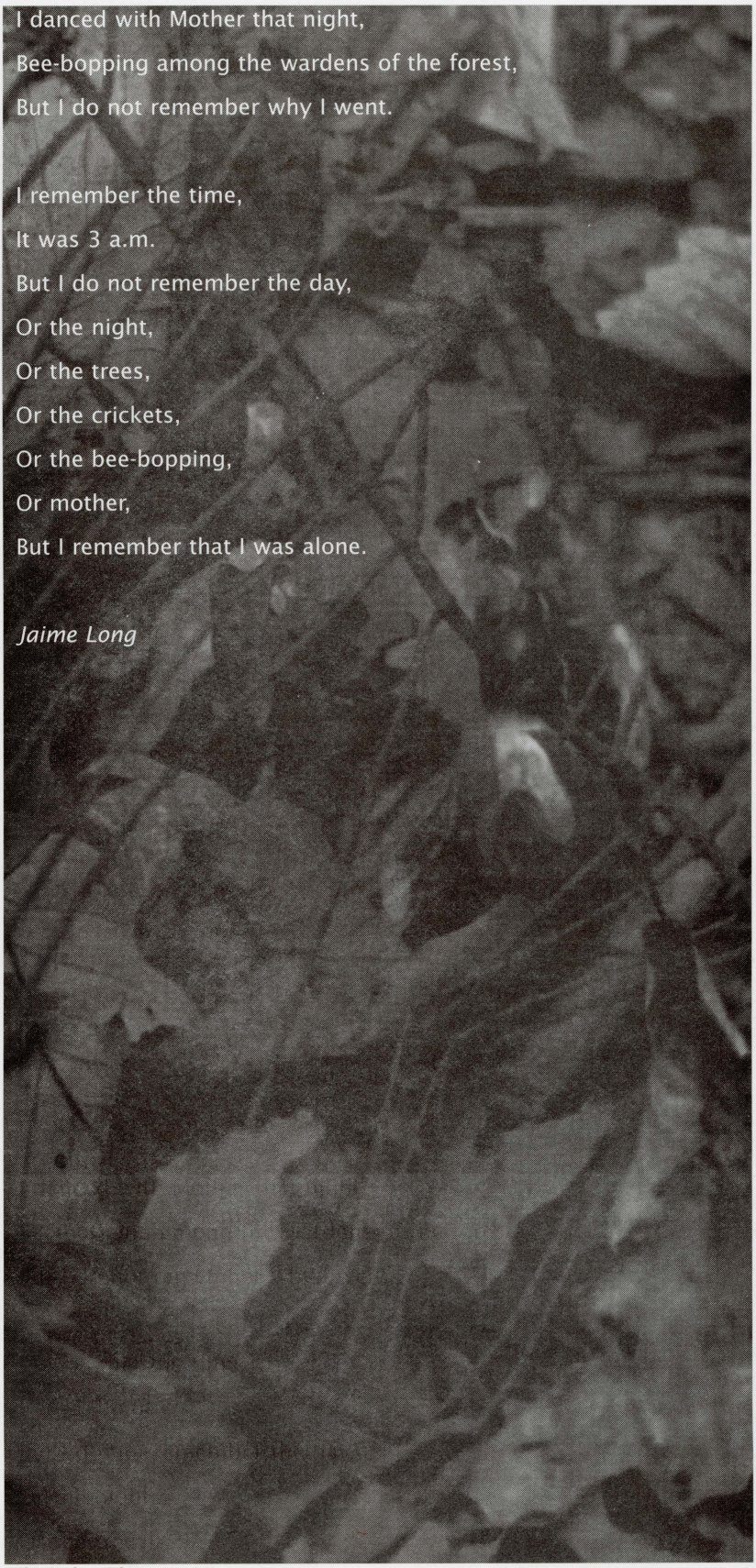
I remember my hand,
How it was extended out,
But I do not remember what I was touching.

I made footprints in the woods,
Among the dead shrubs and carcasses of mice.
But I do not remember who was watching me.

I remember the sweet melody of night,
The trees dancing to the night music,
But I do not remember singing to them.

I watched as a figure faded,
And I remember calling out to it,
But I do not remember if it was you.

I remember falling,
And then jumping,
But I do not remember landing.



I danced with Mother that night,
Bee-bopping among the wardens of the forest,
But I do not remember why I went.

I remember the time,
It was 3 a.m.
But I do not remember the day,
Or the night,
Or the trees,
Or the crickets,
Or the bee-bopping,
Or mother,
But I remember that I was alone.

Jaime Long

Photo by: Shannon Wynne

Song of April

The fireplace is cold tonight as we settle
into this evening of rain. Your voice is pulling music
from a guitar whose strings bend and sing
beneath your fingers. The ants in the kitchen are searching
for sugar. The dreams of a British woman
decorate the walls and mantle: sunlit alleyways
and side yard gates that capture the trembling
muscles of waking from haunted sleep.
I am awake until dawn listening to the echoes of your voice
settle into the floor boards,
into the marrow of my heart.

Theresa White

Photo by: Anonymous

Oh, my dark haloed angel,
let me bury myself in your featherless wings.
This is a city of closed doors and crickets,
of coal cars and dragon flies,

a city of threats and broken promises,
of anger at midnight and rain-glossed steel.
This is a city of fragile deaths and fire ants,
of rock quarries and muskrat.

We have too much history to pray for luck.
The orchid on the mantel is sucking the tips
of its petals
back toward its stem. The iris is already dead.
And our words keep rolling like dice
made of bone,

hard, smooth, and imperfectly weighted.
I remember this: your summer body
leaning against glass,
your voice lilting southern and almost
feminine, calling me
rickety angel. Am I weak because I loved you?

Theresa White

Wishing Wells

Following the intrigue, spying on danger,
I lost my ride in the second hanger.
And everywhere I look, I see you in the mirror.
Torn and televised, another goddess in heat.
White lace wrapped around black curtains.
But no strings would ever secure you.
I still wear your love, but
You're still throwing rotten peaches at the sun, and
I'm still dropping pennies into the water, and
Wishing you were here with me by the well.

Kevin Wisniewski

Photo by: Sigrid Perez

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